

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 NIC-01 SAJ-01 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

DRC-01 IO-14 /135 W

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R 070910Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 672

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 0037

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ELAB, HU

SUBJECT: US-HUNGARIAN RELATIONS AND TRADE UNIONS

1. AT NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION JANUARY 4 FOR DIPLOMATIC CORPS I SPOKE BRIEFLY TO HEAD OF HUNGARIAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AND DEPUTY PRESIDENT GASPAR. I TOLD HIM I HAD READ HIS RECENT SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT AND HAD NOTED WITH SOME INTEREST HIS DEFENSE OF WORKING MAN AND CALL FOR A LARGER VOICE FOR THEM IN INDUSTRIAL DECISION-MAKING AND FOR GREATER SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY FROM MANAGEMENT.

2. GASPAR SAID HE WAS PLEASED WE WERE INTERESTED IN HIS SPEECH AND HE HOPED THAT I WOULD SEND A COPY TO AFL/CIO PRESIDENT MEANY. HE KNEW MEANY DID NOT THINK EASTERN EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS WERE REAL UNIONS. THIS WAS UNDOUBTEDLY SO IN PAST, BUT NOW THINGS WERE CHANGING. HE FELT THEIR UNIONS WERE FUNCTIONING MORE IN WAY OURS DO. MATTERS WERE NOT ALL THEY WOULD WANT YET, BUT PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE. HE HOPED SOME WAY COULD BE FOUND TO RESTORE CONTACT BETWEEN EASTERN EUROPEAN UNIONS AND US LABOR.

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3. I REPLIED THAT I WOULD BE GALD TO SEND A COPY OF

HIS TEXT TO MEANY. I WAS IN HUNGARY WITH ASSIGNMENT TO
SEEK TO FURTHER IMPROVE HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS IN ALL
FIELDS, AND IF THERE WAS ANYTHING CONSTRUCTIVE HE THOUGHT
COULD BE DONE IN THIS AREA I WOULD BE GLAD TO TALK ABOUT
IT. I SAID IN ANY CASE I HAD NOT YET HAD OPPORTUNITY TO
MAKE COURTESY CALL ON HIM, AND HOPED I WOULD HAVE
OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO SOON. GASPAR SAID HE WOULD BE GLAD
TO SEE ME AND HOPED I COULD COME THE END OF JANUARY OR
FIRST PART OF FEBRUARY (PRESUMABLY HE WILL
DEVOTE A GOOD PART OF IT TO ABOVE MATTER). ANY USEFUL BACKGROUND
THE DEPT CAN GIVE ME ON THIS MEETING
WILL BE APPRECIATED AS GASPAR IS INFLUENTIAL FIGURE.
HE HAS CLEARLY BEEN MAKING LABOR AN IMPORTANT POLITICAL IF
NOT TRADE UNION FORCE (IN OUR SENSE) HERE, AND HE HAS UTILIZED
POLITICAL POWER OF UNION MOVEMENT TO BRING ABOUT ADJUSTMENTS IN
HUNGARY'S ECONOMIC POLICIES TO BENEFIT THEM. SOME OF
THESE CHANGES HAVE UNFORTUNATELY BEEN AT EXPENSE OF SOME
OF THE PROGRESSIVE IDEAS OF NEM. THEY HAVE, FOR EXAMPLE,
WEAKENED THE EMPHASIS UPON PROFITABILITY AS A CRITERION
FOR WAGE INCREASES, STATE DIRECTED INCREASES HAVING BEEN
ADOPTED BOTH IN 1973 AND 1974 FOR RELATIVELY UNPROFITABLE
ENTERPRISES, LARGELY AT GASPAR'S BEHEST FOR WORKERS OF STATE
PLANTS. IN ANY CASE THE UNION HERE IS A DISTINGUISHABLE
FORCE FROM THE PARTY AND THE GOVERNMENT AND AN IMPORTANT
INFLUENCE ON FUTURE POLICY.
PEDERSEN

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